



Board of Directors – Operations Committee – Approved

Meeting Details

Date: July 21, 2022

Time: 9:30 AM

Location: Webinar & NCDOT Board Room –
Room 150
1 S. Wilmington St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Attendance

Members Present

Montell Irvin

Members Present Virtually

Mary Clayton, Charles Travis, Sam Hunt

Members Absent

1. Welcome/Introductions, Call to Order & Declaration of Quorum

Montell Irvin, Chair

Discussion Summary

Chairman Montell Irvin called the July 21, 2022, North Carolina Turnpike Authority Operations Committee meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Mr. Irvin called roll and declared a quorum.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

2. Approval of April 21, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Montell Irvin, Chair

Discussion Summary

Mr. Irvin noted everyone received a copy of the meeting minutes prior to the meeting and announced he would accept a motion to approve the April 21, 2022, meeting minutes as written.

Actions Taken

The April 21, 2022, Operations Committee meeting minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Mayor Chuck Travis and second by Ms. Mary Clayton.

3. Opening Comments

J.J. Eden, NCTA Executive Director

Discussion Summary

Mr. J.J. Eden started his opening comments by welcoming everyone to the meeting and by making announcements and introductions.

Mr. Eden introduced several new Turnpike Employees.

Mark Newsome is the new Deputy Chief Financial Officer at NCTA. He is a Certified Public Accountant and was previously the Chief Financial Officer for the Department of Information Technology. His hobbies include building boats and fishing. Mr. Newsome has also founded a travel agency with his wife. It specializes in family leisure travel.

Taylor Hamlet is the newest embedded consultant joining the Communications Team. Ms. Hamlet is with ICF Next and Complete 540 is her priority. She is a graduate of UNC with a MA in Mass Communications and a BS in Environmental Science.

John Hertweck is the new Manager at the Call Service Center in Morrisville. He will also oversee the new CSC in Rocky Mount. Mr. Hertweck represents the contractor for the NC QuickPass Call Service Center, GC Services. With knowledge and experience in the tolling and customer service industries, he has moved to North Carolina from Indianapolis, Indiana. Mr. Hertweck introduced himself to the Members of the Committee.

Mr. Eden talked about the importance of working toward sustainability as a goal for Finance and Operations. Mr. Eden discussed the conferences NC Turnpike Authority staff participate in throughout each year in order to foster education and to exchange industry ideas. Some of the conferences coming up soon are EZ Pass and The IBTTA Annual Meeting.

The ATC Meeting – The NC Department of Transportation Advanced Technology Committee is coming up on August 10th. The Presentation will be by Wejo representatives. Wejo is a worldwide connected vehicle data exchange platform service provider. Wejo will provide information to the Committee Members about data services that come from connected vehicles and how this data can be used for mileage-based user fees, mobility, and safety applications.

Mr. Eden discussed the withdrawn bid for I-485 and mentioned that Mr. Manish Chourey would discuss it in the Toll Technology portion of today's meeting.

Mr. Eden talked about the construction that is ongoing in Rocky Mount for the back-up call center. It is hoped that it will open in September. Job Fairs are ongoing. Restroom updates and other repairs to the Morrisville Customer Service Center are being considered.

The importance and success of the Internship Program at NCTA was highlighted by Mr. Eden. The purpose of the program is to focus on the youth of today and help participants determine future career plans. Of the six current interns, two have switched majors based on the work of their summer internships. Mr. Eden shared his thoughts and knowledge about the value of good internship programs for the NC Turnpike Authority and for college students. He credited Mr. Travis Feltes with running the Internship Program for NCTA and doing a great job. NCTA assigns specific projects to its six interns and supplements the intern experience with specific, timely education.

Turnpike is also working with Wake Tech and HBCU student groups with a focus on future programs for their students.

Mr. Eden closed by mentioning the positive aspects of the expected additional funding for the DOT that is a result of the increase in gasoline taxes. He also commented on the negative impact that higher postage rates will have on the Authority due to the number of invoices mailed to customers.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

4. Complete 540 Construction Update

Dennis Jernigan, P.E., Interim Chief Engineer

Discussion Summary

Mr. Dennis Jernigan provided the committee with an update on Complete 540 construction and public outreach.

After the presentation regarding Complete 540 Phase I, Mayor Chuck Travis asked Mr. Jernigan about the idle and unused equipment and how it affected the ability of the contractors to stay on schedule. Mr. Jernigan stated that the contractors on all three projects were using a variety of solutions to move forward despite the lack of labor availability. One of the projects was taking advantage of night-hauling. Constant hiring of operators and construction workers was necessary. This meant going through 7-10 people a week. They were constantly cycling people through and keeping the most productive operators. The US-70 detour changes had allowed for the project to gain more than three months of time. All of these factors were allowing the contractors to stay on schedule up to this point. Mayor Travis encouraged Mr. Jernigan to continue to monitor the progress and timeline of each project closely. Mr. Jernigan mentioned that the schedules are monitored weekly. This information is part of the Sit Rep (Situational Report) that the department submits to the Secretary of Transportation on a weekly basis. Turnpike has also hired a project manager who spends 20 hours a week out at the jobsite to monitor completion levels and budget. The project manager notifies Turnpike staff immediately regarding status of all indicators.

Mr. Montell Irvin discussed how he and Mayor Travis have been around the construction industry a long time and are aware of the importance of monitoring the schedule and budget issues. With this unusual impact of labor and materials shortages, it is even more important for Turnpike to “be on top of this.” Mr. Jernigan said that he is aware of the importance of this approach. He cited several instances wherein the Turnpike had taken steps to give the contractors more access to roads earlier than originally planned to lend more flexibility and maintain schedule assurance.

Mr. Irvin stated his appreciation for the innovation being used by those at Turnpike to meet the challenges of scheduling. Ms. Mary Clayton continued by discussing how the Committee Members have been talking about all of the issues – labor, cost, equipment, time & weather conditions – for a long time. She continued to state that everyone needs to continue to monitor all of these factors throughout the projects. Mr. Jernigan agreed and recalled that with 2020 being the wettest year on record and North Carolina now experiencing a drought, he appreciated the points Ms. Clayton was making. Mr. Jernigan mentioned that he is proud of how the Turnpike deals with neighborhoods by increasing outreach opportunities. He stressed that Turnpike staff endeavor to listen and address the concerns of the homeowners. He stated that he was proud of the team.

Mr. Jernigan introduced the Construction Intern:

Mr. Sam Capps. Mr. Capps is a resident of Dunn, N.C., and is a rising sophomore at NC State University. As a Civil Engineering major, Mr. Capps talked about his experiences as an intern on the 540 Project. He had hands-on experience with stationing, offset, survey, structure, and concrete pours. In addition, he learned how to read roadway, drainage, and bridge plans while with the survey crew. Mr. Capps told the Board Members that after assisting with bridge pours, he has been studying for the acquisition of ACI (American Concrete Institute) certification. Mr. Irvin thanked Mr. Capps and stated that he had also been an intern as a college student.

5. Complete 540 Phase 2 Update

Dennis Jernigan, P.E., Interim Chief Engineer

Discussion Summary

Mr. Jernigan presented information regarding the Complete 540 Phase 2 Construction.

David Roy, Chief Financial Officer

Discussion Summary

Mr. David Roy updated the Committee regarding Complete Phase 2 Financing.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

6. I-485 Express Lanes Update

Mr. Brian Davis, P.E., Resident Engineer

Discussion Summary

Mr. Brian Davis, P.E., Division 10 Resident Engineer, provided an update on the construction of the I-485 Express Lanes project and showed pictures of toll sites under construction.

Mayor Chuck Travis asked a question about the amount paid to date and noted that it was looking to be about 60% of the adjusted contract. He wanted to know if that referred to work-in-place or if some of that was dedicated toward materials, or materials on order. In other words, how much of work-in-place had been completed. Mr. Davis stated that most of it was associated with work accomplished. Mr. Davis said that there was not a very great percentage of materials on-hand related to that figure. He said that he could get back the same day with information for Mayor Travis. Mayor Travis continued to say that he was ultimately interested in looking at the overall schedule. Was it on track at this point? Ahead? Behind? Mr. Davis said

that things were tracking a little bit behind, considering that the contract did have to be extended. The amount that has been completed has been “paid out.” The project status was a little bit behind in regard to time-to-complete, but that the payout schedule wasn’t affected. Payments are only made for work that has been accomplished.

Mayor Travis asked if the project was on track for completion as of the date published. Mr. Davis answered in the affirmative. Mayor Travis repeated what he had mentioned to Mr. Jernigan in the Complete 540 section which was the importance of keeping an eye on schedules in regard to materials and labor shortages affecting the industry. Mayor Travis emphasized the need for early forecasting and transparency in scheduling. This was especially important in reference to the past completion date estimate and heavy road usage in the Charlotte area. Mr. Davis agreed with Mayor Travis and committed to such ideals. Ms. Clayton voiced the same concerns that Mayor Travis shared regarding the schedule and budget.

Ms. Rachel Ruiz, Implementation Manager

Discussion Summary

Ms. Rachel Ruiz, Implementation Manager, gave an update on the Tolling & ITS Infrastructure for I-485 Express Lanes.

Manish Chourey, Chief Technology Officer

Discussion Summary

Mr. Manish Chourey provided the committee with an update on the I-485 Toll Technology RFP (Request for Proposals).

Mr. Montell Irvin asked for confirmation that according to Mr. Chourey’s presentation the I-485 Toll Technology RFP had been cancelled so that it could be rolled-out on a state-wide basis in the spring of 2024. The focus would remain on I-485, but without the change order delay to expand the scope of service. There will be two de-brief meetings covering the topics (1) Why was the RFP cancelled, and (2) What are the requirements of the new RFP? Mr. Chourey confirmed these items.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

7. Technology Update

Manish Chourey, Chief Technology Officer

Discussion Summary

Mr. Manish Chourey provided the committee an update on Customer Service and Toll Technology. In addition, he detailed the Triangle Expressway and Monroe Expressway Transactions. Mr. J. J. Eden affirmed the complexity of Mr. Chourey’s work. The non-tangible aspects of converting systems,

reporting, and traffic patterns are important to understand. Mr. Irvin added his appreciation for how much has been accomplished through technology in regard to the NC Turnpike.

Mr. Chourey introduced the two Advanced Technology Interns:

Ms. Areeba Khokhar. Ms. Khokhar will be a junior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is double majoring in Computer Science and Business Management. Ms. Khokhar has spent a second summer as a technology intern for NCTA. She gave an informative presentation about creating a data visualization dashboard for the benefit of multiple users. She is also automating the dashboards to have automatic data refresh features. Ms. Khokhar will continue as a part time Turnpike intern throughout the coming academic year.

Mr. Shubhankar Shindgikar. Mr. Shindgikar is a PhD candidate at the University of South Florida. He is majoring in Transportation. He also has both a BS and an MA in Mechanical Engineering. He began studying transportation because of his interest in helping to reduce congestion on the roads. Mr. Shindgikar is researching Connected & Automated Vehicle (CAV) Technology. At NCTA he has developed four dashboards. He has also focused on the Automation Process for Data Ingestion into Power BI for cloud-based interdepartmental communication of data streams. The goal is for a deeper understanding of the data metrics, business progress, and the needs of the system.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

8. Customer Service Update

Angela Queenland, Manager of Customer Service

Discussion Summary

Ms. Angela Queenland provided the Committee Members with information on statistics and trends at the Call Center. The data provided illustrated the number of customers per day handled at the Walk-In and Call Centers. Ms. Queenland also told the Committee Members about the anticipated opening schedule of the Rocky Mount Campus Call Center as being late summer of 2022.

Mr. Montell Irvin said that once the Rocky Mount Call Center was open, he would benefit from a tour of the new facility. Ms. Queenland said it would be her pleasure to arrange the tour for all Board Members.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

9. Communications Department Intern Update

Logen Hodges, Marketing & Communications Manager

Discussion Summary

Mr. Logen Hodges introduced the two Marketing & Communications Interns.

Ms. Caroline Hiel. Ms. Hiel, a rising senior at the University of South Carolina, is majoring in Marketing Advertising with a Minor in Business Administration. She presented a report about her projects and experience at NCTA during the NC Turnpike Authority Finance Committee Meeting on July 20, 2022.

Ms. Jenna Hawkins. Ms. Hawkins is a sophomore at UNC Charlotte and was a Pre-Business Major. She has changed her major to Graphic Design after her experience at NCTA. Ms. Hawkins shared that she worked on several projects: The Complete 540 Grand Opening, and the NCTA Employee Reference Guide. She also revealed the Training and Workshops that she and Ms. Hiel had benefitted from during their internship experience.

Mr. J. J. Eden again emphasized his enthusiasm regarding the NCTA Intern Program. He discussed the knowledge and care that NCTA staff and the contractor staff members bring to the Internship Program. Again, he thanked Mr. Travis Feltes for his work on this program and encouraged anyone interested to apply for future internship opportunities at Turnpike.

Mr. Montell Irvin spoke about the importance of an internship program and Mayor Chuck Travis stated how excellent the intern presentations had all been.

Actions Taken

Information only/no action required.

10. Adjourn

Montell Irvin, Chair

Discussion Summary

Mr. Montell Irvin opened the floor for questions or comments.

Mr. Irvin called for a motion to adjourn the July 21, 2022, North Carolina Turnpike Authority Operations Committee meeting.

Actions Taken

A motion to adjourn the July 21, 2022, Operations Committee meeting was approved upon a call for motion from Ms. Mary Clayton and seconded by Mayor Chuck Travis.